

CLAIMS

1. A system for searching an electronic product catalog, said system comprising:
an organizer configured to receive search requests, said organizer comprising:
an electronic product catalog having at least two entries;
wherein the electronic product catalog is organized into at least two taxonomies;
wherein each of the at least two taxonomies is associated with at least two categories;
wherein the entries correspond to at least one of the at least two taxonomies and also
correspond to at least one of the at least two categories; and
a search engine in communication with the electronic product catalog,
wherein said search engine is configured to search based on the at least two taxonomies
and based on the at least two categories,
wherein the search engine returns, in response to a search request identifying at least a
first taxonomy of the at least two taxonomies, a list of the categories associated with the at least
first identified taxonomy, along with the number of entries associated with each of the categories
associated with the at least first identified taxonomy.

2. The system according to Claim 1, wherein the returned list of categories associated
with the first taxonomy, along with the number of entries associated with each of the categories
associated with the identified taxonomy can be further searched with regard to a second of the at
least two taxonomies, whereby the search engine returns, in response to a search request
identifying the second taxonomy of the at least two taxonomies, a list of the categories associated
with both identified taxonomies, along with the number of entries associated with each of the
categories associated with the second taxonomy.

1 3. The system according to Claim 1, wherein the search engine, having returned, in
2 response to a search request identifying a first taxonomy of the at least two taxonomies, a list of
3 the categories associated with the identified taxonomy, along with the number of entries
4 associated with each of the categories associated with the identified taxonomy, will provide only
5 those categories with a non-zero number of entries associated with the identified taxonomy and
6 will further return sub-categories both associated with the category and having a non-zero number
7 of entries associated with the sub-category.

1 4. The system according to Claim 3, wherein the search engine, having further
2 returned sub-categories both associated with the category and having a non-zero number of
3 entries associated with the sub-category, will, in response to a search request identifying a second
4 taxonomy of the at least two taxonomies, provide a list of the categories with a non-zero number
5 of entries associated with the second identified taxonomy, along with the number of entries
6 associated with each of the categories associated with the second identified taxonomy.

1 5. The system according to Claim 1, wherein the search engine, having returned, in
2 response to a search request identifying a first taxonomy of the at least two taxonomies, a list of
3 the categories associated with the identified taxonomy, along with the number of entries
4 associated with each of the categories associated with the identified taxonomy, will, in response
5 to a string query, provide those entries which both contain the string and are associated with the
6 identified taxonomy.

1 6. The system according to Claim 5, wherein the string is one member of the group
2 consisting of text, image, and graphic.

1 7. The system according to Claim 1, wherein the system comprises a network of
2 computers.

1 8. The system according to Claim 1, wherein the system comprises a single
2 computer.

1 9. The system according to Claim 1, wherein the system further comprises a cache
2 which stores the returned results of the search engine for rapid retrieval.

1 10. The system for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 1,
2 wherein at least one taxonomy of the at least two taxonomies is selected from the group
3 consisting of product type, price, color, size, style, physical characteristics, delivery method,
4 manufacturer, brand, components, ingredients, compatibility, warranty information, model year,
5 age, and version.

6 11. The system for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 1,
7 wherein, in response to a search request identifying one member selected from the group
8 consisting of a taxonomy, a category, and a sub-category, the search engine additionally returns
9 an advertising entry.

10 12. The system for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 17,
11 wherein the advertising entry is at least one member selected from the group consisting of a
12 banner advertisement and a search-visible storefront.

1 13. A system for searching an electronic product catalog, said system comprising:
2 means for networking a plurality of computers; and
3 means for organizing executing in said computer network and configured to receive search
4 requests from any one of said plurality of computers, said means for organizing comprising:
5 an electronic product catalog having at least two entries;
6 wherein the electronic product catalog is organized into at least two taxonomies;
7 wherein each of the at least two taxonomies is associated with at least two categories;

8 wherein the entries correspond to at least one of the at least two taxonomies and also
9 correspond to at least one of the at least two categories; and
10 means for searching in communication with the electronic product catalog,
11 wherein said means for searching is configured to search based on the at least two
12 taxonomies and based on the at least two categories,
13 wherein the means for searching returns, in response to a search request identifying one of
14 the at least two taxonomies, a list of the categories associated with the identified taxonomy, along
15 with the number of entries associated with each of the categories associated with the identified
16 taxonomy.

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18 14. The system according to Claim 13, wherein the returned list of categories
19 associated with the first taxonomy, along with the number of entries associated with each of the
20 categories associated with the identified taxonomy can be further searched with regard to a
21 second of the at least two taxonomies, whereby the means for searching returns, in response to a
22 search request identifying the second taxonomy of the at least two taxonomies, a list of the
23 categories associated with both identified taxonomies, along with the number of entries associated
24 with each of the categories associated with the second taxonomy.

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26 15. The system for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 13,
27 wherein the means for searching, having returned, in response to a search request identifying a
28 first taxonomy of the at least two taxonomies, a list of the categories associated with the identified
29 taxonomy, along with the number of entries associated with each of the categories associated with
30 the identified taxonomy, will provide only those categories with a non-zero number of entries
31 associated with the identified taxonomy and will further provide sub-categories associated with
32 the category and having a non-zero number of entries associated with the sub-category.

1 16. The system for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 15,
2 wherein the means for searching, having further returned sub-categories both associated with the
3 category and having a non-zero number of entries associated with the sub-category, will, in
4 response to a search request identifying a second taxonomy of the at least two taxonomies,
5 provide a list of the categories with a non-zero number of entries associated with the second
6 identified taxonomy, along with the number of entries associated with each of the categories
7 associated with the second identified taxonomy.

1 17. The system for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 15,
2 wherein the means for searching, having returned, in response to a search request identifying a
3 first taxonomy of the at least two taxonomies, a list of the categories associated with the identified
4 taxonomy, along with the number of entries associated with each of the categories associated with
5 the identified taxonomy, will, in response to a string query, provide those entries which both
6 contain the string and are associated with the identified taxonomy.

1 18. The system for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 17,
2 wherein the string is one member of the group consisting of text, image, and graphic.

1 19. The system for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 15,
2 wherein the system comprises a network of computers.

1 20. The system for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 15,
2 wherein the system comprises a single computer.

1 21. The system for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 15,
2 wherein the system further comprises a cache which stores the returned results of the means for
3 searching for rapid retrieval.

1 22. The system for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 15,
2 wherein at least one taxonomy of the at least two taxonomies is selected from the group
3 consisting of product type, price, color, size, style, physical characteristics, delivery method,
4 manufacturer, brand, components, ingredients, compatibility, warranty information, model year,
5 age, and version.

1 23. The system for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 15,
2 wherein, in response to a search request identifying one member selected from the group
3 consisting of a taxonomy, a category, and a sub-category, the means for searching additionally
4 returns an advertising entry.

5 24. The system for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 23,
6 wherein the advertising entry is at least one member selected from the group consisting of a
7 banner advertisement and a search-visible storefront.

8 25. A method for searching an electronic product catalog, said method comprising:
9 communicating a search request to a search engine, the search engine being in
10 communication with an electronic product catalog;

wherein the electronic product catalog has at least two entries;

wherein the electronic product catalog is organized into at least two taxonomies;

wherein each of the at least two taxonomies is associated with at least two categories;

wherein the at least two entries correspond to at least one of the at least two taxonomies
and also correspond to at least one of the at least two categories;

querying of the electronic product catalog by the search engine based on the
communicated search request;

11 wherein the communicated search request identifies at least one of the at least two
12 taxonomies;
13 returning of a list of the categories associated with the at least one identified taxonomy,
14 along with the number of entries associated with each of the categories associated with the at least
15 one identified taxonomy as a response to the querying of the electronic product catalog.

1 26. The method for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 25,
2 wherein the method further comprises
3 returning, in response to a search request identifying a second taxonomy of the at least two
4 taxonomies, a list of the categories associated with both identified taxonomies, along with the
5 number of entries associated with each of the categories associated with the second taxonomy.

6 27. The method for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 25,
7 wherein the method further comprises
8 returning a list of only those categories with a non-zero number of entries associated with
9 the identified taxonomy and further returning at least one sub-category associated with the
10 category and having a non-zero number of entries associated with the sub-category.

11 28. The method for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 27,
12 wherein the method further comprises
13 having further returned sub-categories both associated with the category and having a non-
14 zero number of entries associated with the sub-category, providing, in response to a search
15 request identifying a second taxonomy of the at least two taxonomies, provide a list of the
16 categories with a non-zero number of entries associated with the second identified taxonomy,
17 along with the number of entries associated with each of the categories associated with the second
18 identified taxonomy.

1 29. The method for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 25,
2 wherein the method further comprises
3 returning, in response to a string query, provide those entries which both contain the string
4 and are associated with the identified taxonomy.

1 30. The method for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 29,
2 wherein the string is one member of the group consisting of text, image, and graphic.

1 31. The method for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 25,
2 wherein the system comprises a network of computers.

1 32. The method for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 25,
2 wherein the system comprises a single computer.

1 33. The method for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 25,
2 wherein the system further comprises a cache which stores the returned results of the means for
3 searching for rapid retrieval.

1 34. The method for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 25,
2 wherein at least one taxonomy of the at least two taxonomies is selected from the group
3 consisting of product type, price, color, size, style, physical characteristics, delivery method,
4 manufacturer, brand, components, ingredients, compatibility, warranty information, model year,
5 age, and version.

1 35. The method for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 25,
2 wherein the method further comprises
3 returning by the search engine additionally, in response to a search request identifying one
4 member selected from the group consisting of a taxonomy, a category, and a sub-category, an
5 advertising entry.

1 36. The method for searching an electronic product catalog according to Claim 35,
2 wherein the advertising entry is at least one member selected from the group consisting of a
3 banner advertisement and a search-visible storefront.

1 37. An article of manufacture comprising:
2 a computer usable medium having computer program code means embodied thereon for
3 searching an electronic product catalog, the computer readable program code means in said article
4 of manufacture comprising:

5 computer readable program code means for communicating a search request to a search
6 engine, the search engine being in communication with an electronic product catalog;

7 wherein the electronic product catalog has at least two entries;

8 wherein the electronic product catalog is organized into at least two taxonomies;

9 wherein each of the at least two taxonomies is associated with at least two categories;

10 wherein the at least two entries correspond to at least one of the at least two taxonomies
11 and also correspond to at least one of the at least two categories;

12 computer readable program code means for querying of the electronic product catalog by
13 the search engine based on the communicated search request;

14 wherein a communicated search request identifies at least one of the at least two
15 taxonomies; and

16 computer readable program code means for returning of a list of the categories associated
17 with the at least one identified taxonomy, along with the number of entries associated with each
18 of the categories associated with the at least one identified taxonomy as a response to the
19 querying of the electronic product catalog.

1 38. The article of manufacture according to Claim 37, wherein the returned list of
2 categories associated with the first taxonomy, along with the number of entries associated with
3 each of the categories associated with the identified taxonomy can be further searched with regard
4 to a second of the at least two taxonomies, whereby the computer readable program code means
5 for querying of the electronic product catalog by the search engine returns, in response to a search
6 request identifying the second taxonomy of the at least two taxonomies, a list of the categories
7 associated with both identified taxonomies, along with the number of entries associated with each
8 of the categories associated with the second taxonomy.

1 39. The article of manufacture according to Claim 37, wherein the computer readable
2 program code means for querying of the electronic product catalog by the search engine, having
3 returned, in response to a search request identifying a first taxonomy of the at least two
4 taxonomies, a list of the categories associated with the identified taxonomy, along with the
5 number of entries associated with each of the categories associated with the identified taxonomy,
6 will provide only those categories with a non-zero number of entries associated with the identified
7 taxonomy and will further provide sub-categories associated with the category and having a non-
8 zero number of entries associated with the sub-category.

1 40. The article of manufacture according to Claim 39, wherein the computer readable
2 program code means for querying of the electronic product catalog by the search engine, having
3 further returned sub-categories both associated with the category and having a non-zero number
4 of entries associated with the sub-category, will, in response to a search request identifying a
5 second taxonomy of the at least two taxonomies, provide a list of the categories with a non-zero
6 number of entries associated with the second identified taxonomy, along with the number of
7 entries associated with each of the categories associated with the second identified taxonomy.

1 41. The article of manufacture according to Claim 37, wherein the means for
2 searching, having returned, in response to a search request identifying a first taxonomy of the at
3 least two taxonomies, a list of the categories associated with the identified taxonomy, along with
4 the number of entries associated with each of the categories associated with the identified
5 taxonomy, will, in response to a string query, provide those entries which both contain the string
6 and are associated with the identified taxonomy.

1 42. The article of manufacture according to Claim 41, wherein the string is one
2 member of the group consisting of text, image, and graphic.

1 43. The article of manufacture according to Claim 37, wherein at least one taxonomy
2 of the at least two taxonomies is selected from the group consisting of product type, price, color,
3 size, style, physical characteristics, delivery method, manufacturer, brand, components,
4 ingredients, compatibility, warranty information, model year, age, and version.

1 44. The article of manufacture according to Claim 37, wherein, in response to a search
2 request identifying one member selected from the group consisting of a taxonomy, a category,
3 and a sub-category, the search engine additionally returns an advertising entry.

45. The article of manufacture according to Claim 44, wherein the advertising entry is
at least one member selected from the group consisting of a banner advertisement and a search-
visible storefront.